JUSTICE LEAGUE TASK FORCE

7

DEC 93

BY DAVID, VELLUTO & ALBRECHT

THE MARTIAN MANHUNTER™ AS YOU'VE NEVER SEEN HIM!

JUSTICE LEAGUE® TASK FORCE™

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

GREAT HERA, J'ONN™--IS THAT YOU?!

Velluto
Albrecht

VRROOOM

DEEPEST AFRICA...

I DIDN'T KNOW THAT ONE OF THE PARACHUTES HAD A HOLE IN IT...

OOOOFF!

...BUT IT IS MY PLANE. I SHOULD HAVE DIBS ON THE REMAINING CHUTE...

SORRY ABOUT THIS, MR. H!

...DON'T'CHU THINK? CHEERS, THEN.

YOU... LOUSY BRIT BASTARD!

STICKS AND STONES, MATE.

THAT BUSINESS ABOUT A CAPTAIN GOING DOWN WITH HIS SHIP WAS INVENTED BY *INSURANCE COMPANIES* TRYING TO *AVOID* PAYOUTS.

NOW ME... I GO BY ANY LANDING THAT YOU WALK AWAY FROM...

...OR SWIM AWAY FROM...

...IS A BLOODY GOOD ONE!

WHA--?!

EEYARHHH!

2

Hunh

Hunh

HO...LEE--!

3

WITH APOLOGIES TO JACQUELINE SUZANNE...

VALLEY OF THE DAALS!

OH, GOD...

...I MUST BE DREAMING!

Written by PETER DAVID
Pencilled by SAL VELLUTO
Inked by JEFF ALBRECHT
with AARON McCLELLAN
Lettered by BOB PINAHA
Colored by GLENN WHITMORE
Assistant Editing by RUBEN DIAZ
Editing by BRIAN AUGUSTYN

REPEATING, THIS IS AGENT HENRY R. HAGGARD, IN EXTREME DISTRESS...

INSANE AS IT SOUNDS, I HAVE STUMBLED ON SOME SORT OF...

...OF SUBTERRANEAN LOST CIVILIZATION, OR ITS REMNANTS.

MY CARGO IS INTACT, THANK GOD. I WILL NEED HELP, THOUGH...

...BECAUSE I CAN'T GET OUT MYSEL--

--Uh, BASE...

...I'M NOT SURE, BUT I THINK I'M TRAPPED IN AN EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS NOVEL!

KONK

UNHH!

JUSTICE LEAGUE HEADQUARTERS...

BWAA-HA HA HAHA

MAY I ASK WHAT YOU FIND SO AMUSING?

POP CORN

"AN AFFAIR TO REMEMBER."

THIS IS THE DOPIEST THING I'VE EVER SEEN! I MEAN, LOOK AT THESE PEOPLE!

J'ONN, WHY DID YOU THINK WE'D LIKE THIS FILM?

BLUE BEETLE SAID HE'D HEARD WOMEN FOUND IT MOVING.

THE ONLY THING "MOVING" IS MY STOMACH!

SIMPERING FOOLS, THE BOTH OF THEM!

MAXIMA'S RIGHT, J'ONN. THIS IS REALLY PATHETIC.

I WILL NEVER UNDERSTAND WOMEN...

...NOT THAT I'LL EVER UNDERSTAND HUMANS AS A WHOLE, BUT WOMEN ARE ESPECIALLY PERPLEXING!

WE ONLY PERPLEX THOSE MEN WHO WOULD CATEGORIZE US!

THIS ROMANTIC CLAPTRAP...

...WHAT SANE WOMAN WOULD FIND IT REMOTELY AFFECTING?

SOB SOB

SNIIIFF

WHAT A NOBLE WOMAN SHE IS. SO PROUD AND SELF-SACRIFICING...

J'ONN, WHERE DID YOU GET THEM FROM?

THEY SEEMED APPROPRIATE, GIVEN THE NATURE OF OUR NEXT MISSION.

MARTIN IS NOW READY TO PROVIDE US WITH SOME FINAL DETAILS.

I APOLOGIZE IF THE ENTERTAINMENT PROVIDED WAS NOT UP TO YOUR STANDARDS.

AND YOU TWO, AS WELL.

COMING.

WORK ON IT.

AS YOU WISH. LET'S GO.

SNIFFFF

TV ROOM

HONNNK

OKAY, PEOPLE. LISTEN UP.

IT WAS BEING PRODUCED BY A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION...

AN AGENT NAMED *HENRY R. HAGGARD* MANAGED TO GET HIS HANDS ON A NEWLY DEVELOPED, DEADLY VIRUS CALLED THE *McGUFFIN VIRUS.*

...BUT HAGGARD MANAGED TO GET THE *ONLY* KNOWN SPECIMEN.

HOWEVER, HIS ESCAPE PLANE RAN INTO PROBLEMS AND HE PLUNGED IN A BODY OF WATER IN AFRICA.

WE HAVE A TRACKING DEVICE THAT GIVES US A READOUT OF WHERE HIS PLANE IS.

HE'S STILL *ALIVE,* THEN?

OH, HE'S *ALIVE,* ALL RIGHT...

...COMMUNICATING WITH US VIA A TRANSPORTABLE BROADCAST RIG. BUT HE'S BEEN TAKEN *PRISONER*... AS YOU'LL SEE IN OUR *FINAL* TRANSMISSION FROM HIM.

THEY SAID THIS IS THE *LAST* TIME I CAN SPEAK WITH YOU.

IN FACT, THEY...THEY WANT TO TALK WITH YOU THEMSELVES.

PLEASE MAKE THEM UNDERSTAND HOW *DANGEROUS* MY CARGO--

I AM *LUTA*...

...SHE WHO SERVES HER-WHO-MUST-BE-SERVED.

ONLY-MEN, SUCH AS *THIS,* ARE *FORBIDDEN* HERE.

HE CLAIMS THIS DEVICE TALKS TO HIS KIND.

SINCE THIS IS OUR *FIRST* CONTACT WITH YOU, SHE-WHO-MUST-BE-SERVED HAS DECREED...

...THAT WE GIVE AMBASSADORS FROM YOUR WORLD A CHANCE TO *RECLAIM* THIS ONLY-MAN.

FEMALE AMBASSADORS, OF COURSE.

IF WE DO NOT HEAR FROM YOU IN ONE WEEK, WE WILL *DISPOSE* OF THIS ONLY-MAN.

THAT IS *ALL.*

YOU SEE THE SITUATION.

THAT IS WHY EACH OF YOU HAS BEEN *CAREFULLY* SELECTED...

...WONDER WOMAN...

...AN ALL FEMALE SOCIETY SHOULD BE SOMETHING YOU'RE FAMILIAR WITH.

VIXEN...

...SINCE A JUNGLE IS INVOLVED, YOUR ANIMAL POWERS WILL ENABLE YOU TO FUNCTION WELL.

MAXIMA.

IN ADDITION TO YOUR PSIONIC POWERS, YOU YOURSELF ARE A RULER.

GYPSY...

...YOUR NATURAL CAMOUFLAGE ABILITY IN A JUNGLE WILL MAKE YOU *UNDETECTABLE.*

DOLPHIN...

...THE PASSAGE-WAY WE *KNOW* OF IS UNDER WATER. YOU WILL BE *INVALUABLE* IN THAT REGARD.

SAYS WHO?

YOU'RE THE *LEADER*, J'ONZZ. BESIDES, YOU SAW...THEY'RE *GREEN!*

PERHAPS I COULD MONITOR THEM REMOTELY.

CONSIDERING THAT I AM *MALE*, HOW DO YOU PROPOSE I...

MY *ONLY* REGRET IS THAT, SINCE *WOMEN* ARE STIPULATED FOR THIS, I *CANNOT* ACCOMPANY YOU.

NO, J'ONZZ. AND DON'T THINK YOU CAN SPEND THE WHOLE TIME *INVISIBLE.*

I WANT YOU AT THE *FOREFRONT* OF THIS GROUP!

...I...

...OH, YOU CAN'T BE *SERIOUS!*

YOU! HOLD IT!

LOOK, YOU'VE GOT TO LET ME TALK TO YOUR LEADER!

SHE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND THE DANGERS INVOLVED IN--

SHE UNDERSTANDS ALL TOO WELL.

SHE WILL TEST THE *METTLE* OF THE WOMEN FROM YOUR WORLD. AND IF THEY DO NOT MEASURE UP...

...THEN THEIR HEADS WILL BE SENT BACK, ALONG WITH YOURS AS A WARNING NOT TO INTRUDE ON OUR LAND AGAIN!

--OH YEAH? JUST YOU WAIT AND SEE THE TYPE OF WOMEN THEY'LL SEND!

C'MON, J'ONZZ. BE REASONABLE ABOUT THIS.

NOK NOK

I AM BEING REASONABLE. AND I'M NOT COMING OUT.

LOOK, AM I GONNA HAVE TO COME IN AND DRAG YOU OUT?

"DRAG" IS AN...UNFORTUNATE CHOICE OF WORDS.

J'ONN, WHAT'S THE DEAL?

WE KNOW YOU'RE A SHAPESHIFTER. ONE SHAPE SHOULD BE LIKE ANOTHER TO YOU.

YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT NOTHING.

A LEADER CANNOT LEAD IF HE APPEARS LUDICROUS TO THOSE WHO WOULD FOLLOW HIM.

AND WHAT SORT OF LEADER IS AFRAID TO FACE THOSE HE OR SHE WOULD LEAD?

IT'LL BE OKAY, J'ONN.

YOU'LL LAUGH.

NO WE WON'T. WE PROMISE.

BZZZZZ

SAL & JEFF

12

VERY WELL. I'M TRUSTING YOU TO BE MATURE ABOUT THIS.

OH, GOD...

...IT'S JOAN J'ONZZ!

HA HA HA HA HA HAHA HA

WE'RE SORRY! HEEEHEEEEE HA

YES, ABSOLUTELY! WE'RE... BWAAAHAHAHA...

FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH...

...I THINK YOU LOOK ADORABLE!

13

THE HOMING SIGNAL READS ABOUT ANOTHER TWO HUNDRED FEET DOWN.

WHO'D'VE THOUGHT THIS "LAKE" WOULD GO DOWN SO FAR?

KEEP US ON COURSE, GYPSY. IT WOULD NOT DO TO GET LOST DOWN HERE.

THAT'S ODD. WHAT SORT OF FISH *ARE* THOSE?

LOOKS LIKE PIRANHA.

THEY'RE NOT.

YOU CAN *TALK*?!

OF COURSE. I JUST DON'T WASTE WORDS.

PIRANHA ARE PREDOMINANTLY SOUTH AMERICAN. THIS IS AFRICA.

SHE'S RIGHT. SO WHAT *ARE* THEY?

WE WON'T GET LOST. I MEAN, NOW THAT YOU'RE A WOMAN, YOU'D BE WILLING TO STOP AND ASK FOR DIRECTIONS, RIGHT?

VERY AMUSING. WATCH THE DIALS.

WHAT IS THAT RACKET?

TIC TIC TIC

SOME SORT OF CRAZY FISH, ATTACKING THE SHIP.

HELL, IT'S NOT LIKE THEY CAN EAT *METAL*, RIGHT?

SPRANG

JOAN!

I SEE IT! AND PLEASE *DON'T* CALL ME JOAN!

SPLOOSH

YOU SEE *THAT ONE*, TOO?!

WE GOT A *PROBBBLEM!*

I'LL MELT THE METAL TOGETHER! THAT'LL BUY US A FEW--

--ACCKKK!

SPLOOSH

FZZZZZZ

GET ME OUT THERE! I CAN STOP THEM!

BUT...

I'M *DISINCLINED* TO ARGUE. GYPSY, STUFF HER IN THE NUMBER ONE TORPEDO TUBE. *QUICKLY!*

FOOOMM

SHE *DID* IT! SHE SWAM THROUGH THEM AT TOP SPEED AND THEN TOOK *OFF*! AND THEY'RE ALL FOLLOWING HER!

AS LONG AS THEY DIDN'T WEAKEN THE HULL TOO MUCH, WE'RE *SAFE*!

SPLA-SHOOOM

GOOD CALL, DIANA! GOOD FREAKIN' CA--

GLUBB

:Ahhhuk KKK!:

DON'T TALK. MY FORCEBUBBLE HAS LIMITED AIR.

BUT... BUT NOW WHAT DO WE--

I SAID DON'T TA--

--AALLLLK!

DON'T WORRY. I'M COPYING FISH POWERS. YOU'LL BE FINE.

WHAT DID SHE SAY?!

--SOMETHING LIKE, "LONE LOOLLY, LIME LOLLYING LISH LOWLERS. LOOLEE LINE."

THIS WAY. HURRY.

DID YOU SAY, "LISS LAY LULLY"?

WHAT?

WHAT?

BLOODY UNDERWATER AMATEURS.

WHY COULDN'T I UNDERSTAND YOU DOWN THERE, DOLPHIN?

HEY, YOU WEREN'T EXACTLY MS. ELOCUTION YOURSELF, VIX.

SUBAQUATIC CONVERSATION IS AN ACQUIRED SKILL. WATER DOESN'T VIBRATE THE WAY AIR DOES.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE PIRANHA?

WHEN I LOOPED BACK DOWN TOWARDS THE BOTTOM, THEY STOPPED FOLLOWING.

APPARENTLY THEY DON'T LIKE TO COME DOWN THIS FAR. THAT'S PROBABLY WHY HAGGARD WASN'T EATEN ALIVE.

INCREDIBLE! AN ENTIRE SUBTERRANEAN WORLD.

WITH SUNLIGHT? THIS DOESN'T MAKE SENSE.

MAKES AS MUCH SENSE AS ANY OF THIS!

YOU NOTICE, NOW THAT SHE'S TALKING, SHE WON'T SHUT UP!

IT'S BEAUTIFUL, THOUGH.

FRANKLY, ALMERAC HAS A MUCH LOVELIER LAND-SCAPE!

FURTHER-MORE, I...

DOWN!

...HUH?!

WHERE'D THAT COME FROM?!

SAME PLACE AS THOSE.

THEY DARED TRY TO ASSASSINATE ME?!

IF IT'S OF ANY COMFORT, THEY'RE NOT SINGLING YOU OUT!

GO EASY ON THEM. REMEMBER, WE'RE THE INTRUDERS HERE!

DOLPHIN, GET BEHIND ME!

GO EASY ON THEM?!

LIKE HELL!

CIRCLE AROUND THEM! CUT OFF THEIR--

--URKH!

WAM

BRING US THE "ONLY-MAN" BEFORE WE ARE FORCED TO HURT YOU!

STOP! IT IS OVER!

THESE ONES ARE WORTHY.

AND THIS ONE MAY BE EVEN MORE WORTHY THAN SHE SUSPECTS.

COME WITH US... TO THE PLACE THAT WE CALL... CITY!

"'CITY.' THAT'S INGENIOUS. HOW DID *MENSA* MISS OUT ON SIGNING UP THESE BOZOS?"

"QUIET, GYPSY."

I, LUTA, HIGH PRIESTESS OF *HER*, NOW WARN YOU OF HER ADVENT! THE COMING OF THE RULER OF *ALL* THE DAALS.

ALL COWER BEFORE...

...HER WHO MUST BE SERVED!

INCREDIBLE.

GREEN ONE... WHAT DO THEY CALL YOU?

WE ALL CALL HER JOAN.

TRUTHFULLY, I'D FAR PREFER IF YOU--

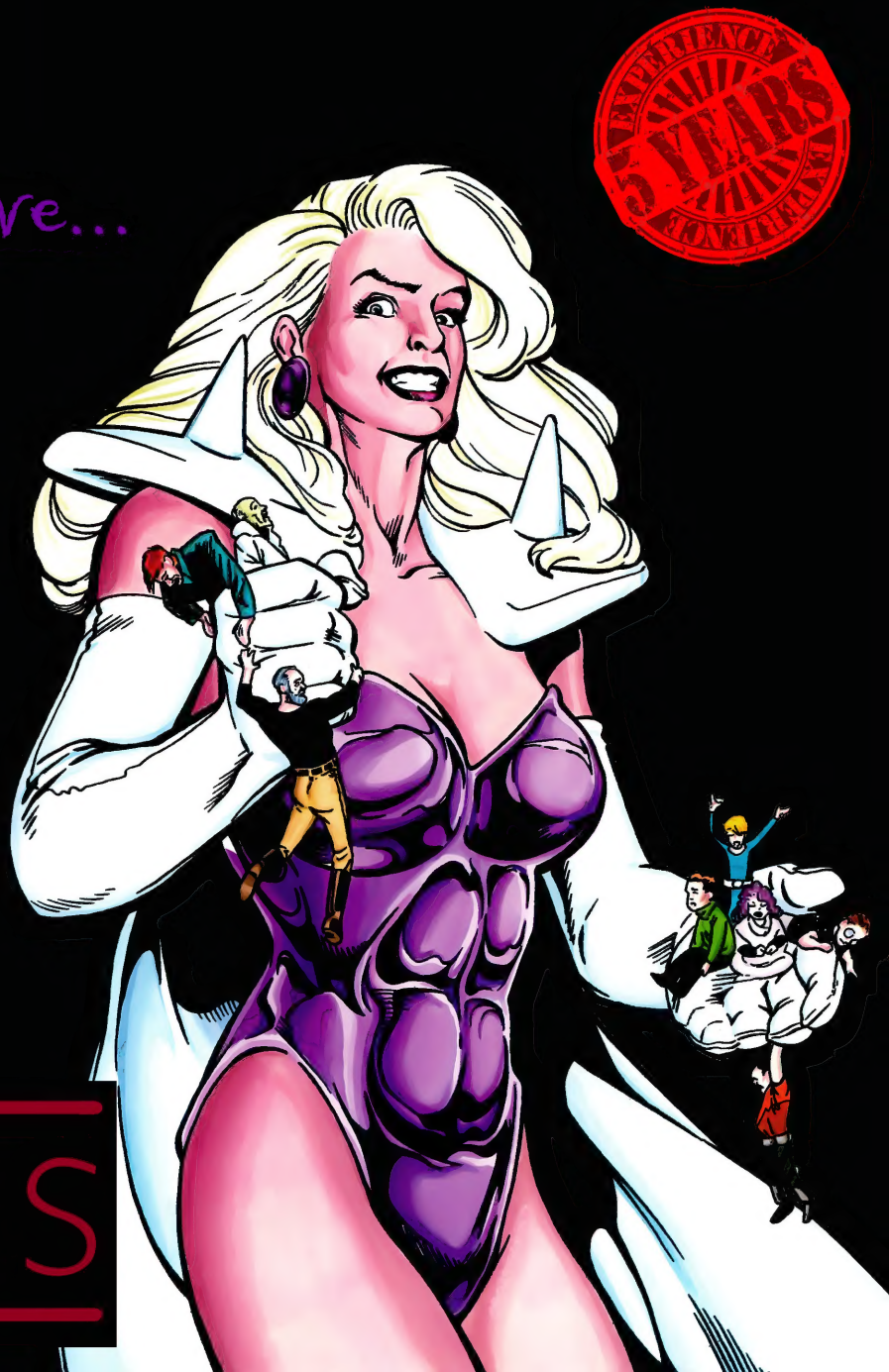
OH, BEAUTEOUS JOAN...LONG HAVE I WAITED FOR ONE SUCH AS YOU.

ONE WORTHY TO BE...

...MY MATE!

NEXT: HOW GREEN WAS MY DAALIE?!

From Baaldur, with love...



GLORITH

novus